appear to be on account, in the first case, of the inclemency of the climate, its destroying effect on any ornament too exposed to it; and, in the second case, from the fact that light is not favourable with us to the production of effect, or the expression of delicate outlines. This principle in both respects as practised by our forefathers seems to be correct, because adapted to produce the best effect, and the surest protection; but as the thickness of modern walls does not often admit of the same depth of recession, it may be necessary to practise it always in conjunction with the Southern principle. Be this as it may, we may be sure that nothing is more important than the study of mouldings. But this study, as insisted on by all, is not what is usually meant, viz. the production of a more *beautiful* example from a known model, not the making a cyma more delicately exquisite in outline than any known, but the study which shall give to each individual member the tone of the intended expression, both in outline and shadow; for it is necessary that we should be impressed with the fact, that even the most simple forms convey an expression of some definite character to the imagination. The nature of this difference was shown before, in the three cyma rectas, and the nice perception of this difference is always a great merit in the artist. The effect of a building greatly depends on the fitness of these outlines in form and shadow for the development of its character, and they demand the most careful attention: those which project should be more studied in their outline, and those which recede, in their shadow. The number of classic mouldings is certainly insufficient for the multifarious ends to which mouldings must serve, and to the important place they hold in architectural effect as shown by Northern buildings; but an excessive use of them is destructive of that breadth of form and shadow which public buildings should possess; for they cut up and render little the largest masses, as may be seen in the decline of Gothic art, of which this custom is one of the surest symptoms. The almost sole attention given to the production of shadow in Gothic mouldings renders them unsatisfactory to the admirers of form; indeed, their outlines are often positively ugly: from them we may learn that mouldings of more than two curves are to be avoided, for a third curve weakens the idea of strength, and to gain this a fillet is necessary. The idea of a continuous number of curves in a classic cornice is evident, but this continuity is rendered agreeable by the fillets which separate them individually, or, to use a better expression, bind them together and give them that feeling of strength which architecture, from its great necessary admixture of right lines, is calculated to express. The horizontal direction of mouldings as predominant can only be proper where simple repose is the principle of construction; for it is this (the means of construction) which justly receives that decoration and placing forward to which it is entitled. In no case is this more clearly and beautifully followed out than in Greek architecture; nothing can be more simple; the cornice, the frieze, and architrave are here formed on the actual construction, and the supporting columns are particularly studied; but with all its merit how unsatisfactory in this respect is the Basilica of Vicenza, which, over the arched system of construction, has another system antagonistical in the necessary direction of its mouldings, and which renders it difficult to say which lines predominate. The arch here is the great feature of its effect, and the disagreement of horizontal lines with it is seen by the depressing appearance of the comparatively heavy entablature which surmounts it. This building is perhaps the most wonderful and beautiful combination of two most opposite principles which study and genius could devise, and yet, I think shows that where the arch is used, the lines which best assimilate with it are the vertical. This is a most important question, for the congruity of character gained by the direction of lines in connection with the construction is incontestible, and for the production of excellence one system must predominate.

In all mouldings which project, where the character by means of form is sought, no better example than Palladio can be chosen, especially in the Basilica, which, rich as it is in general character, has not one moulding ornamented; but for mouldings which recede, and which depend on shadow principally for their power, ornament may be justly applied, and there should be many projecting points to catch the reflected light, and define more clearly their outlines. Not that the projecting are never to receive ornament, but that the receding ones should receive more. Opposition of form in mouldings is very agreeable to the eye; and increased value is given to the general outline, as seen in the curve of the Corinthian abacus against the straight line of architrave. The importance of this opposition of form is well known to painters, and is one of their rules of composition.

J. B. W.

THE FIRE IN MARK-LANE.

An enormous gap has been made by the fire which occurred last week in Mark-lane, in the city. It extends from Mark-lane to Seething-lane, and presents a scene of ruin looked down upon from some of the neighbouring houses, which serves to give an idea of that "5th Sept. 1666," when Pepys, who lived in this very Seething-lane, wrote, "about two in the morning my wife calls me up and tells me of new cries of fire, it being come to Barking-church, which is at the bottom of our lane."

The Corn Market, rebuilt by Mr. George Smith in 1828, had a narrow escape of entire destruction.*

The whole of this neighbourhood is deeply interesting, looked at with knowledge. In this Seething-lane, first Sidon-lane, according to Stow, and then Sything-lane, the old Navy-office stood. According to the *Audit-office Enrolments*, quoted in Cunningham's "Handbook," on the 17th of July, 1788, "Sir Wm. Chambers, the architect, received the sum of 11,500*l.* being the purchase money agreed with the Lords Commissioners of his Majesty's Treasury for the premises where the late Navy-office stood."

THE ORTHOGONAL SYSTEM OF HAND-RAILING.

The construction of hand-rails is a difficult part of the joiner's business, and requires for the attainment of proficiency in it intelligence and application. A good staircase-hand is an artizan of no ordinary merit, and ought to have a better standing in the opinion of the multitude than he at present holds,—and we might say the same of many other artizans. Compare some of whom we are speaking with half the small shopkeepers of the metropolis as to skill and knowledge, and the advantage will be found greatly on the side of the artizan. It can scarcely be denied that artizans as a class have suffered from the irregularities of individuals of their body. If every man would remember that ill conduct on his part injures beyond himself, and also, on the other hand, that he has power individually to aid in raising his class, the result could scarcely fail to be satisfactory. The great body of skilled English artizans are a credit to the country, and deserve high praise.

We must keep hold, however, of the hand-rail. The heading of this article is the title of a little book, setting forth a mode of constructing hand-railing, for which the Society of Arts awarded a medal to its author, Joshua Jeays.† The *least* that can be said in favour of the work is, that it sets forth in black and white, for the first time, what many old hands have already found out for themselves.

We will let the writer speak for himself, and explain the *theory of the orthogonal face-mould*. "In preceding examples are shown methods of obtaining the section of a cylinder, and the application of it to the construction of the common face-mould of a hand-rail. The orthogonal face-mould, the nature of which we shall now explain, is employed merely for the purpose of determining the form of the least solid that is capable of containing within it the square wreath. The common face-mould was originally the only one employed in the process of cutting out the wreath, but the solid cut out to the form of the common face-mould contains a greater quantity of material than is required in the formation of the wreath. The difficulty of applying the common face-mould to the plank, and the impossibility of ascertaining what part of the plank the wreath will require from the mere position of the face-mould, render it necessary that some other method should be employed.

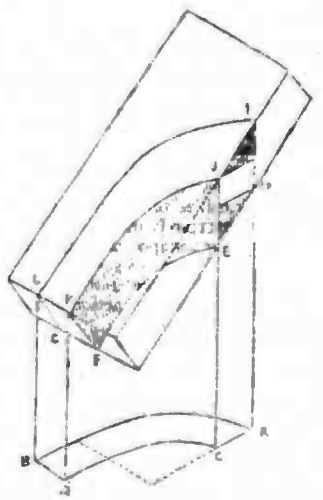

Fig. 1.

In figure 1. is shown the outlines of a plank with the oblique solid required by the use of the common face-mould drawn within it. A B C D is the plan of a quadrant of a wreath, and E F L I is the oblique solid required. It will be seen that in cutting out this solid the saw must be held in a position parallel to the vertical side E K F J of the solid; the consequence of this is, that in some cases the saw cut is of great depth. The consequent amount of labour required in cutting out the solid will of course be proportionally increased with the depth of the cut, or with the length of the vertical line E J.

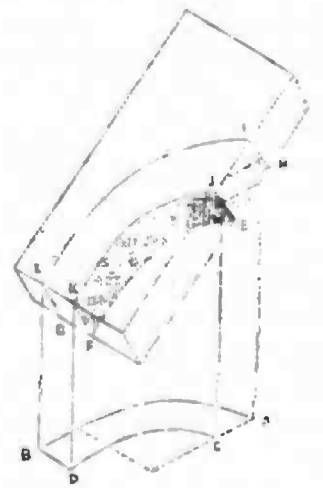

Fig. 2.

A rectangular solid may be cut out of the plank that will contain the square wreath as perfectly as the oblique solid shown in fig. 1. The accompanying diagram exhibits a solid of this description, with the end of the square wreath J H shown within it. In cutting out this solid, the saw is held perpendicularly to the surface of the plank.

The advantages of the above, over the old method of cutting out the wreath, will be at once acknowledged when it is considered that the workman can, without hesitation, mark the whole of his wreath upon the plank, and can truly estimate the quantity of material required to complete his hand-rail before he commences, which by the use of the common face-mould would have been impossible.

The method of constructing the orthogonal

* According to the newspapers, a tablet has been discovered since our visit, having inscribed thereon the following:—"This was rebuilt in 1793. The foundation of 'base courts,' are the remains of the original palace where the City standard of weights and measures was formerly kept, and designated, in Saxon phraseology, 'Assay Thing Court,' the entrance to which was in, as is now called, 'seething-lane.'"

† The Orthogonal System of Hand-railing, with practical Illustrations of the Construction of Stairs. By Joshua Jeays. London, Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. 1860.

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